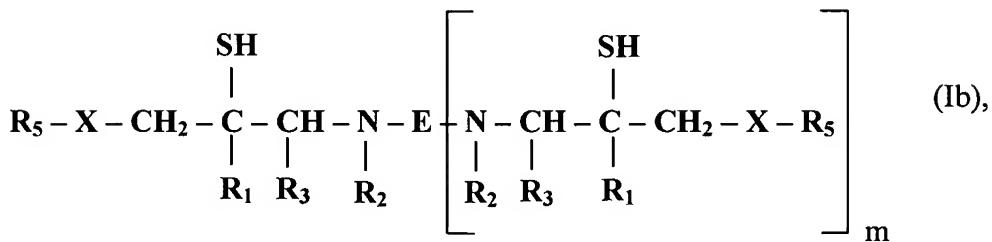
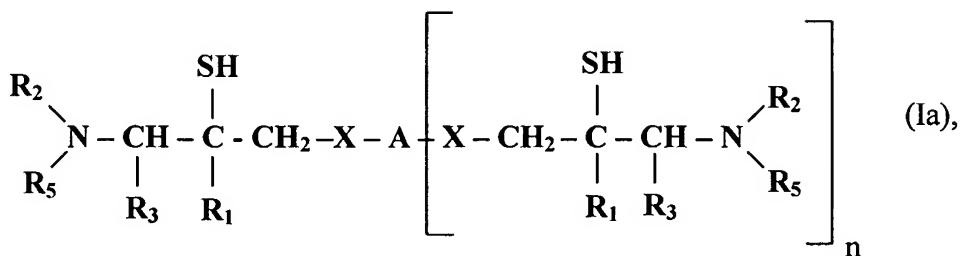


**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (withdrawn). A compound of formula Ia or Ib,



wherein A is an  $(n + 1)$ - valent aliphatic, cycloaliphatic, araliphatic or aromatic radical

and n is an integer from 0 to 5,

E is an  $(m + 1)$ - valent aliphatic, cycloaliphatic, araliphatic or aromatic radical and m is an integer from 0 to 3,

X is  $-\text{O}-$ ,  $-\text{C}(=\text{O})\text{O}$  or  $-\text{CH}\text{R}_4-$ , with  $\text{R}_4$  and  $\text{R}_3$  together forming an ethylene group,

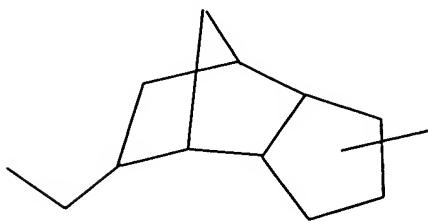
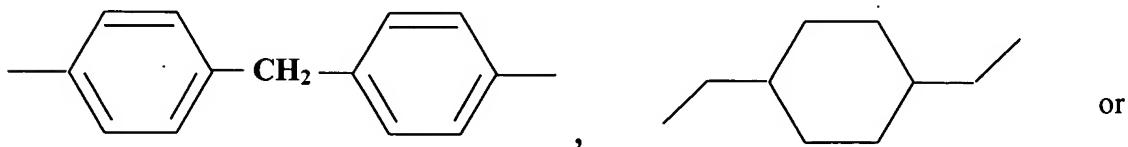
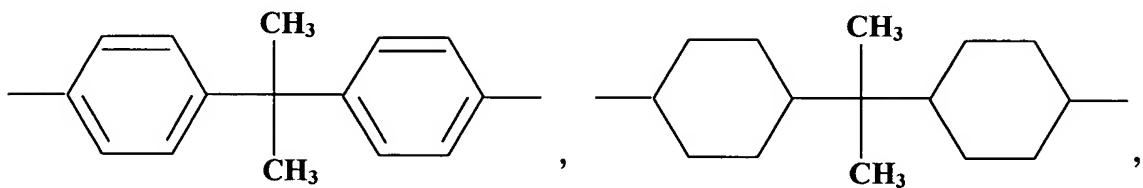
$\text{R}_1$  and  $\text{R}_2$  are, each independently of the other hydrogen or methyl,

$\text{R}_3$  is hydrogen,

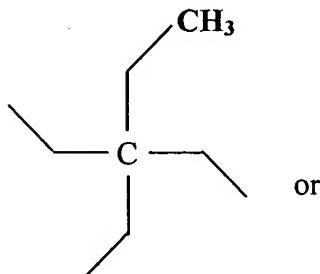
And  $R_5$  is a monovalent aliphatic, cycloaliphatic, araliphatic or aromatic radical.

Claim 2 (withdrawn). A compound of formula Ia according to claim 1, wherein X is -O- and A is a bivalent radical of a bisphenol or of a cycloaliphatic diol, the radical of a phenol novolak or cresol novolak, the bi- to tetra-valent radical of an isocyanate/polyol adduct or the tri- to hexa-valent radical of a tri- to hexa-functional aliphatic polyol.

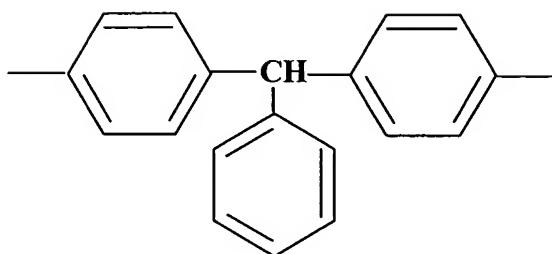
Claim 3 (withdrawn). A compound of formula Ia according to claim 1, wherein X is -O- and A is a bivalent radical of formula



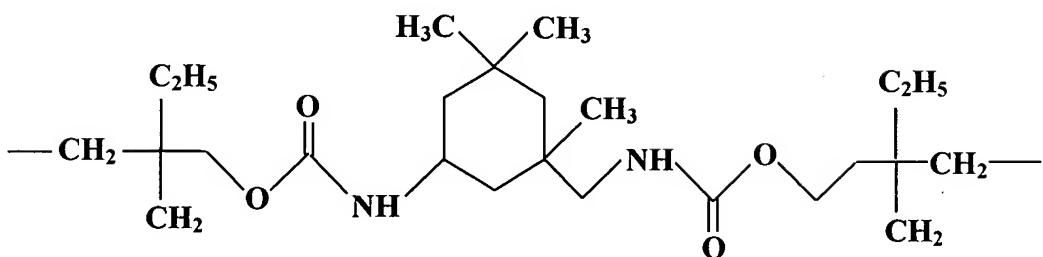
the radical of a phenol novolak or cresol novolak, a trivalent radical of formula



or



or the tetravalent radical of formula

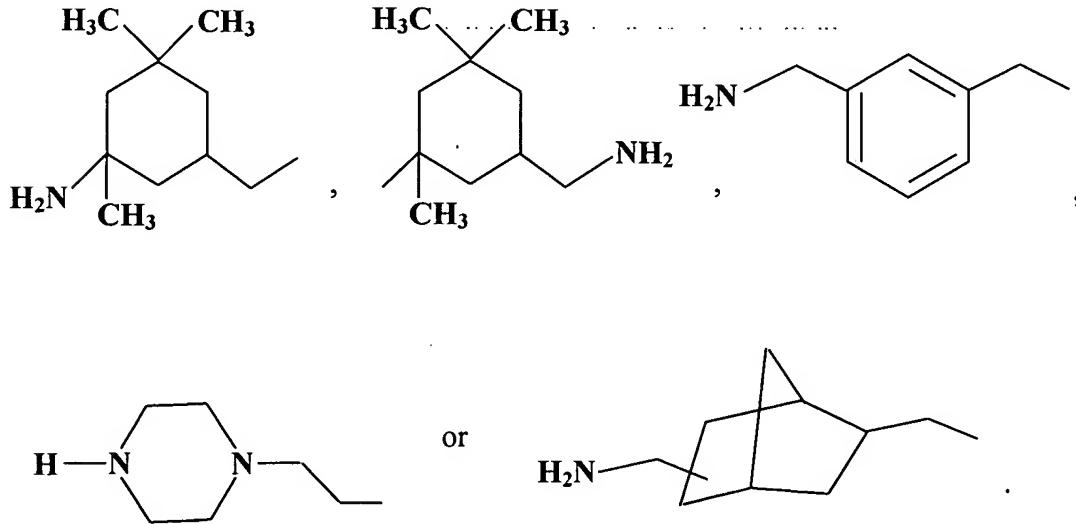


Claim 4 (withdrawn). A compound of formula Ia or Ib according to claim 1, wherein R<sub>5</sub> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>alkyl, C<sub>5</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>- cycloalkyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>aryl or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>aralkyl, each of which is

unsubstituted or substituted by one or more amino groups, hydroxyl groups, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>alkoxy groups or halogen atoms.

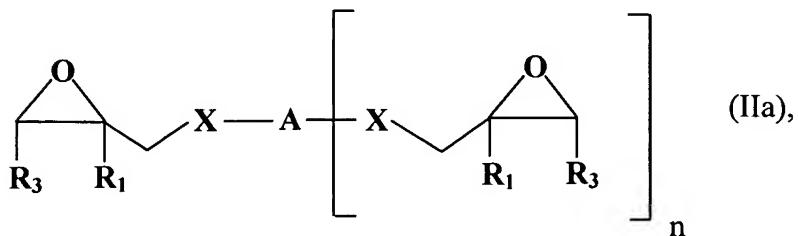
Claim 5 (withdrawn). A compound of formula Ia or Ib according to claim 1, wherein R<sub>5</sub> is C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>alkyl, C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>aminoalkyl, phenyl, benzyl, cyclohexyl or a radical of formula H<sub>2</sub>N-Z-CH<sub>2</sub>-NH-, wherein Z is a bivalent cycloaliphatic, araliphatic or aromatic radical or a radical of formula -(CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>NH)<sub>k</sub>-CH<sub>2</sub>-, wherein k is 2 or 3.

Claim 6 (withdrawn). A compound of formula Ia or Ib according to claim 1, wherein R<sub>5</sub> is n-butyl, n-octyl, cyclohexyl, benzyl, 2-aminoethyl, 4-(aminomethyl)pentyl, 5-amino-2-methylpentyl, 3-dimethylaminopropyl, 3-methylaminopropyl, 4-aminocyclohexyl or a radical of formula -CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>NHCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>NH<sub>2</sub>,



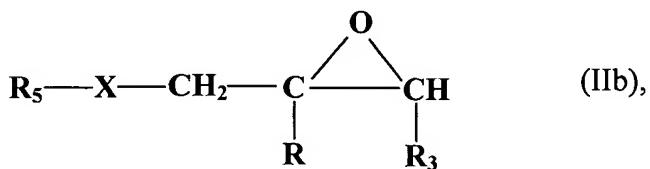
Claim 7 (withdrawn). A compound of formula Ia or Ib according to claim 1, wherein X is O- and R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> are hydrogen.

Claim 8 (withdrawn). A process for the preparation of a compound of formula Ia according to claim 1 by reacting a compound of formula IIa



wherein A, X, R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>3</sub> and n are defined in claim 1,  
with thiourea or a thiocyanate and subsequently reacting the resulting episulfide with an amine of formula R<sub>5</sub>-NH-R<sub>2</sub> wherein R<sub>5</sub> and R<sub>2</sub> are as defined in claim 1.

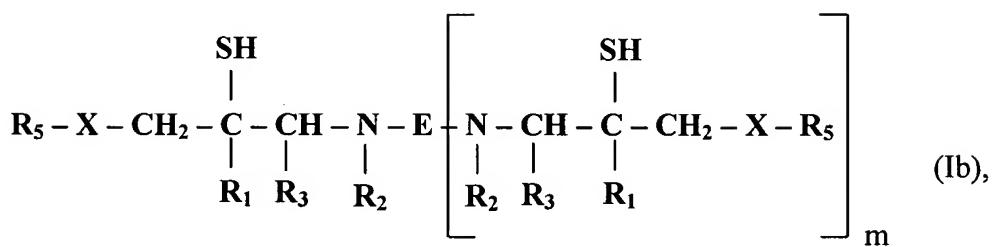
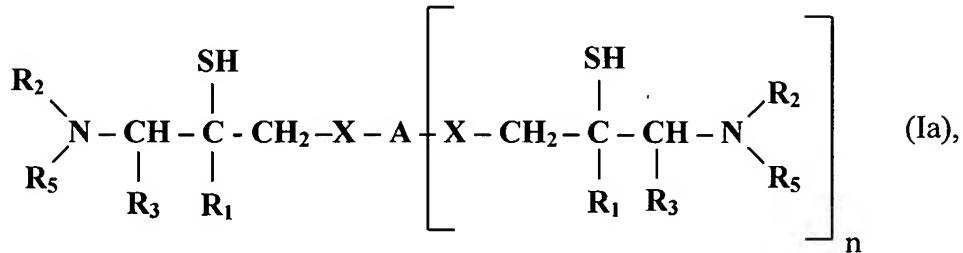
Claim 9 (withdrawn). A process for the preparation of a compound of formula Ib according to claim 1 by reacting a compound of formula IIb



wherein X, R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>3</sub> and R<sub>5</sub> are as defined in claim 1,  
with thiourea or a thiocyanate and subsequently reacting the resulting episulfide with a polyamine of formula E-(NHR<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m+1</sub> wherein E, R<sub>2</sub> and m are defined in claim 1.

Claim 10 (currently amended). A composition comprising:

- (A) an epoxy resin and
- (B) a compound of formula Ia or Ib



wherein A is an  $(n + 1)$ -valent aliphatic, cycloaliphatic, araliphatic or aromatic radical

and n is an integer from 0 to 5,

E is an  $(m + 1)$ -valent aliphatic, cycloaliphatic, araliphatic or aromatic radical and m is an integer from 0 to 3,

X in formula Ia is -O-, C(=O)O or when  $\text{R}_3$  is not hydrogen -CHR<sub>4</sub>-, with R<sub>4</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> together forming an ethylene group,

X in formula Ib is -O-, C(=O)O,

R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>2</sub> are, each independently of the other, hydrogen or methyl,

R<sub>3</sub> is hydrogen or in formula Ia, R<sub>3</sub> and R<sub>4</sub> together form an ethylene group,

And R<sub>5</sub> is a monovalent aliphatic, cycloaliphatic, araliphatic or aromatic radical.

Claim 11 (withdrawn). The composition according to claim 10 further comprising

(C) a polyamine.

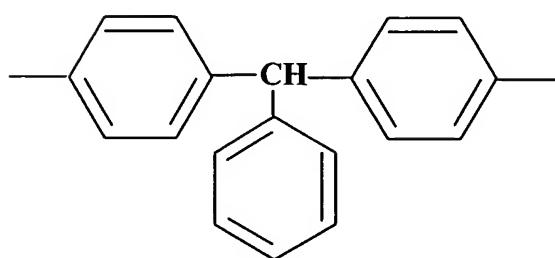
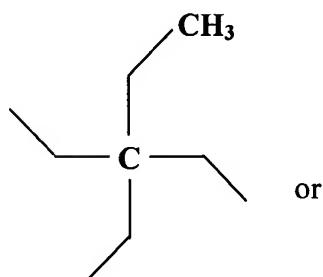
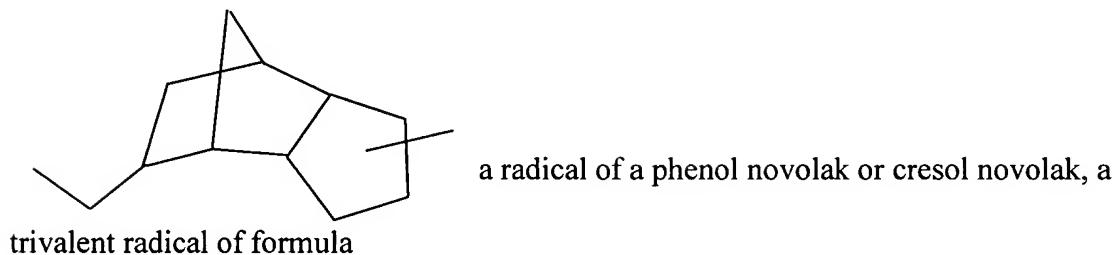
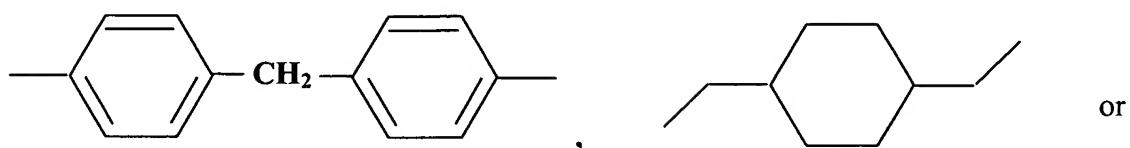
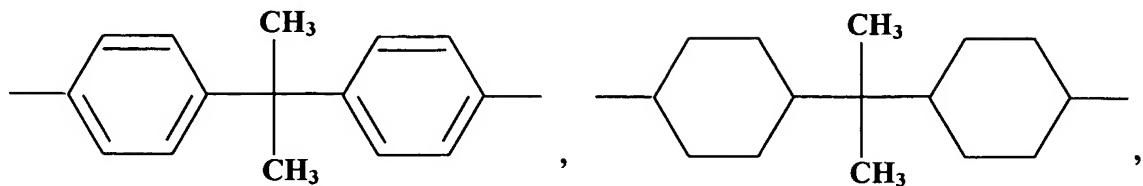
Claim 12 (currently amended). The composition according to ~~either~~ claim 10 or ~~claim 11~~ comprising component B ~~and, where applicable, component C~~ in such amounts that the sum of the amine and mercaptan equivalents is from 0.5 to 2.0 equivalents, based on one epoxy equivalent.

Claim 13 (original). A cross-linked product obtainable by curing a composition according to claim 10.

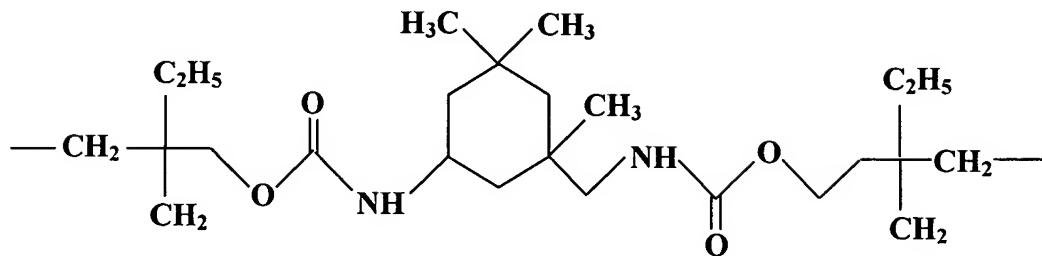
Claim 14 (cancelled).

Claim 15 (previously presented). The composition according to claim 10, wherein in the compound of formula Ia, X is -O- and A is a bivalent radical of a bisphenol or of a cycloaliphatic diol, a radical of a phenol novolak or cresol novolak, a bi- to tetra-valent radical of an isocyanate/polyol adduct or a tri- to hexa-valent radical of a tri- to hexa-functional aliphatic polyol.

Claim 16 (previously presented). The composition according to claim 10, wherein in the compound of formula Ia, X is -O- and A is a bivalent radical of formula



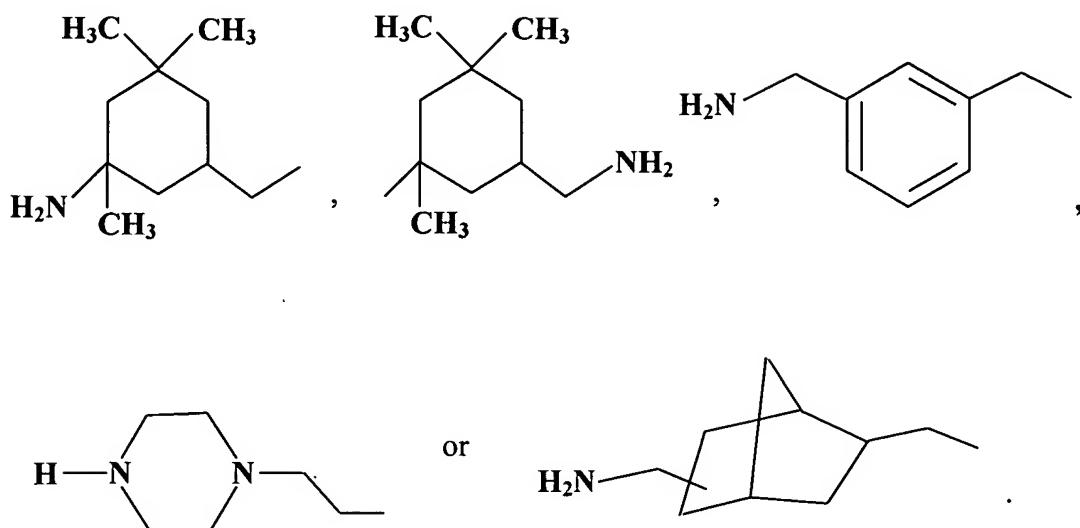
or a tetravalent radical of formula



Claim 17 (previously presented). The composition according to claim 10, wherein R<sub>5</sub> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>20</sub>alkyl, C<sub>5</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>- cycloalkyl, C<sub>6</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>aryl or C<sub>7</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>aralkyl, each of which is unsubstituted or substituted by one or more amino groups, hydroxyl groups, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub>alkoxy groups or halogen atoms.

Claim 18 (previously presented). The composition according to claim 10, wherein R<sub>5</sub> is C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>alkyl C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>10</sub>aminoalkyl, phenyl, benzyl, cyclohexyl or a radical of formula H<sub>2</sub>N-Z-CH<sub>2</sub>-NH-, wherein Z is a bivalent cycloaliphatic, araliphatic or aromatic radical of formula -(CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>NH)<sub>k</sub>-CH<sub>2</sub>-, wherein k is 2 or 3.

Claim 19 (previously presented). The composition according to claim 10, wherein R<sub>5</sub> is n-butyl, n-octyl, cyclohexyl, benzyl, 2-aminoethyl, 4-(aminomethyl)pentyl, 5-amino-2-methylpentyl, 3-dimethylaminopropyl, 3-methylaminopropyl, 4-aminocyclohexyl or a radical of formula -CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>NHCH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>NH<sub>2</sub>,



Claim 20 (previously presented). The composition according to claim 10, wherein X is O- and R<sub>1</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> are hydrogen.

Claim 21 (withdrawn). The composition according to claim 11, wherein the polyamine is a cycloaliphatic or aliphatic amine.

Claim 22 (withdrawn). The composition according to claim 21, wherein the polyamine has the formula R<sub>5</sub>-NH-R<sub>2</sub> or E-(NHR<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m+1</sub>, wherein R<sub>5</sub>, R<sub>2</sub>, E and m are defined as in claim 10.

Claim 23 (currently amended). The composition according to claim 12 either claim 10 or claim 11 comprising component B and, ~~where applicable, component C~~ in such amounts that the sum of amine and mercaptan equivalents is from 0.8 to 1.5 equivalents, based on one epoxy equivalent.

Claim 24 (currently amended). The composition according to claim 23 ~~either claim 10 or~~  
~~claim 11~~ comprising component B and, ~~where applicable~~, component C in such amounts  
that the sum of amine and mercaptan equivalents is from 0.9 to 1.2 equivalents, based on  
one epoxy equivalent.

Claim 25 (previously presented). The composition according to claim 10, wherein X is  
-O- or -C(=O)O.